

Fish Tales – Topics and Presenters

Keith Lott



Keith has a bachelor's degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Management, and a Master's degree in Applied Ecology and Conservation Biology from Frostburg State University in Maryland. He has been involved in wind energy and wildlife issues for over a decade. After graduate school he worked for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife as their Wind Energy Wildlife Biologist. Keith has been with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the Columbus Ohio Ecological Services Field Office for the last five years.

Wind Energy in Ohio, Keeping Green Energy Green (Topic # 2) (May 6 & 11)

This program reviews the status of commercial-scale wind energy in Ohio and the Service's role in assessing potential impacts to plants and wildlife. What resources have been developed and what have we learned regarding potential impacts to wildlife over the last decade.

USFWS, away from the Refuge (Topic # 1) (May 14)

While most folks commonly associate the Service with wildlife refuges, their mission extends well beyond the borders of national wildlife refuges. This talk will focus on the work of the Service outside of the wildlife refuge and their role in community.

Justin Woldt



Justin is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin – Madison, with a bachelor's degree in Zoology and Psychology. He has worked for the Department of the Interior for more than 10 years and has been stationed at Yellowstone National Park, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Congaree National Park, and Carlsbad Caverns National Park. He currently serves as the Visitor Services Manager at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (Topic # 3) (May 7 & 13)

Discover the USFWS's role in marine management as Justin shares his experience to Laysan Island and Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuges. Pictures and stories will focus on the challenges associated with managing these remotes sites, and how marine conservation through these monuments protects more than 473 million acres of Pacific Ocean habitat, 7,000 marine species, and more than 28 million seabirds of 23 known species! Oh, and also the history of the free world!

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Rebecca Lewis



Rebecca has a bachelor's degree in Resource Management from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. She has worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 26 years in Minnesota, Michigan and Ohio.

History of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (Topic # 4) (May 15)

Prior to becoming part of the National Wildlife Refuge System the refuge properties were the sites of native fishing villages, famous battles, visits from a president, destinations for rum runners, homes, farms, hunt clubs and much more. Learn about the rich history of our three refuges and how they came to be part of the refuge system.

Birding Midwest National Wildlife Refuges (Topic # 6) (May 8)

There are many refuges that are excellent birding destinations scattered throughout the Midwest United States. Learn when the best time to visit these refuges is and which spots you don't want to miss.

Jennie Lewis Braatz



Jennie began her naturalist career as a county park volunteer at the age of 12. She has served as an environmental educator in the Peace Corps in Nicaragua, an interpretive park ranger with the National Park Service, and as a visitor services park ranger at the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge and Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (Topic # 5) (May 9)

Detroit River IWR is nearly 6,000 acres of islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and waterfront lands along 48 miles of Detroit River and Western Lake Erie shorelines. Find out more about the units that make up the nation's ONLY international wildlife refuge.

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Jody DeMeyer, Visitor Services Manager



After 15 years of moving across the country with the US Fish and Wildlife Services to places like Alaska and Louisiana, Jody is proud and excited to finally be back in Southeast Michigan. She is pleased to be sharing her knowledge and love of what makes the Detroit River international Wildlife Refuge such a special place.

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (Topic # 5) (May 10)

Southeast Michigan has long been a center for industry and pollution. As a result, the Detroit River has paid a tremendous price. Yet special places exist alongside the concrete and steel of this vast metropolitan area; the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, a place where wildlife can come first.

Cathy Allen



For nearly ten years, Cathy Allen has been helping nonprofit groups and governmental agencies build organizational capacity through board development, strategic planning, and establishment of policies. After an early career in government and election campaigns, Cathy trained in meeting facilitation and organizational development. She holds a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the Center for Nonprofit Resources in Toledo, Ohio. A lifelong nature enthusiast, Cathy was a former executive director of the Ohio League of Conservation Voters, and president of Friends of Ottawa NWR. She continues to serve on the friend's board today. She is a native of the Lake Erie North Coast and currently lives in Marblehead, Ohio.

Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (Topic # 7) (May 12)

Since getting involved at Ottawa NWR Cathy has developed a real passion for the refuge system as a whole, and has become a keen supporter of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. Last year, in honor of their 40th anniversary as an organization, they put out a challenge to visit 40 national wildlife refuges, and she did it! In 2015, she visited 40 different wildlife refuges, from Alaska to Florida, taking pictures and learning a lot. Her presentation is about the National Wildlife Refuge System, its history, relevance today, and what we have to do to keep it strong for the future. She will share pictures from her travels to illustrate the significance of the system and hopefully inspire others to visit and get involved with national wildlife refuges locally or wherever they are from.